

VLR - 8/13/85

NRHP - 2/7/86

Form No. 10-306 (Rev. 10-74)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

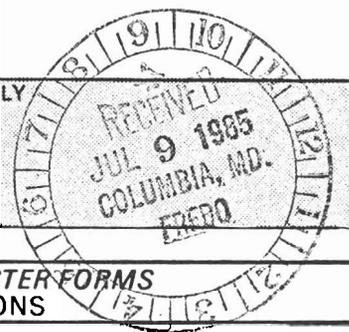
NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR FEDERAL PROPERTIES

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED



SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC
Arlington Post Office
AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER
3118 North Washington Blvd. _ NOT FOR PUBLICATION
CITY, TOWN CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
Arlington VICINITY OF 10th
STATE CODE COUNTY CODE
Virginia 51 Arlington 013

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 AGENCY

REGIONAL HEADQUARTERS: *(If applicable)*
Field Real Estate and Buildings Office - U.S. Postal Service
STREET & NUMBER
P.O. Box 701
CITY, TOWN STATE
Columbia VICINITY OF Maryland

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Arlington County Courthouse
STREET & NUMBER
1400 North Courthouse Road, Room 400
CITY, TOWN STATE
Arlington Virginia

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE
Historic Resources in the Clarendon Commercial District
DATE
May 1985 _ FEDERAL _ STATE COUNTY _ LOCAL
DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS Planning Division Arlington, Va.
CITY, TOWN STATE

NOTE: Bldg. designated historic district by Arlington County Historical
Affairs and Landmark Review Board - September, 1984

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

SUMMARY DESCRIPTION

The Arlington Post Office is a handsome one-story Georgian revival structure built in 1937. Both its form and detailing are unusual for post office construction of the 1930s. While the Arlington Post Office is clearly inspired by early American architecture, its detailing is simplified and stylized in a manner typical of the period. The building possesses a dignified, institutional presence often lacking in other contemporary post offices. The Palladian, geometric aspects of Georgian revival architecture incorporated in the design of the Arlington Post Office lend it a greater dignity and presence than other contemporary post offices relying on domestic scale and ornament for stylistic identification.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION

The Arlington Post Office is a one-story brick building constructed over a full basement. Brick is laid with grapevine mortar in modified common bond with headers every fifth course. The building is pentagonal in plan with the main entrance, at the center of a wall, facing northwest onto the intersection of Washington Blvd. and North Hudson Street. This entrance centers the primary facade, which is three bays wide. The detailing of the primary facade is returned for one bay on each of the adjacent facades along Washington Boulevard and North Hudson Street to create a frontispiece for the building. The primary facade is comprised of a domed portico flanked by two tripartite windows inset within arches. The central window within each opening is six-over-six; the narrower windows are two-over-two. Simple Doric limestone pilasters form the window surrounds. The arched area above the entablature is finished with stucco. A rubbed brick belt-course ornaments the frontispiece at the spring of the arches. A simple limestone entablature and projecting cornice extends around this portion of the building and the dome, unifying the architectural composition.

The dome, which rises above the flat roof of the building, is supported by four fluted limestone piers. Three granite steps form the foundation of the portico. Incised block lettering spells out "UNITED STATES POST OFFICE" within the frieze of the dome. The copper dome, originally covered with gold leaf, is now painted a stucco color. The entrance to the building is recessed within the cylindrical volume created by the portico. The wood and glass entry vestibule extends only to the height of the beltcourse. Sidelights flank recent aluminum and glass doors that are topped by a four-light transom. A Greek key entablature surmounts the vestibule. "Arlington Virginia" appears in incised script lettering at the (See Continuation Sheets)

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1937

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Louis A. Simon, Supervising Arch.

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Arlington Post Office, built in 1937, is an excellent example of modern interpretation of the Georgian revival style. As the first federal building in the County, it provided a focal point for establishing the identity of Arlington. The Post Office represented an important milestone in the development of Arlington from an agglomeration of disparate suburban villages to the community it is today. The Arlington Post Office meets Criterion A ("associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history") because of the role it played in the formation of a single Arlington identity for the communities located within the boundaries of Arlington County. It meets Criterion C ("embodies the distinguishing characteristics of a type...possesses high artistic values") because it is an excellent example of the Georgian revival adapted to a modern aesthetic. Both the quality and subject matter of the interior murals further enhance the unifying civic function of the building. The exceptional significance required for buildings under 50 years old is, however, met only for Criterion A.

HISTORY

The Post Office Department established the Arlington Post Office on July 1, 1936 to consolidate postal service within Arlington County. This post office assumed the services that had been provided by the Rosslyn, South Washington, Glen Carlyn, Ballston, and Georgetown (D.C.) post offices. As early as June of that year, the County was informed that \$200,000 had been appropriated for a consolidated post office to be located in Clarendon. (Sun, June 25, 1936.) Bids for land ranging from \$7500 to \$107,000 were accepted by July 16; the present site was purchased for \$24,850 in August of that year. (Sun, July 16, 1936 and August 27, 1936.) Drawings show that design had begun by November 1936. The Post Office was designed under the authority of Louis A. Simon, Supervising Architect of the Treasury. The drawings were signed and checked by so many individuals that it is not possible to isolate design responsibility. DeGelleke, K. Schmidt, George A. Degenhardt, D. Furquson, Ormsby, White, Rice, Savolaine, Kelly, Chan, J.A. Hewitt, Kennedy, Peele and Morris are among the names that appear on the drawings. (See Continuation Sheets.)

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See Continuation Sheets

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 33,774 sq. ft.

UTM REFERENCES Washington West D.C. - Md. - Va.; Quadrangle scale 1:24000

A	1 8	8 1 8 2 4 0	4 3 0 5 9 5 0	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The nominated property occupies part lot 191, lots 192-199 inclusive, and part lots 200-205 inclusive, Moore's Addition to Clarendon.

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Betty Bird, Architectural Historian

June 1985

ORGANIZATION

DATE

STREET & NUMBER

2025 Eye Street, N.W., Suite 801

TELEPHONE

202-463-2033

CITY OR TOWN

Washington, D.C. 20006

STATE

12 CERTIFICATION OF NOMINATION

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER RECOMMENDATION

YES

NO

NONE

A. Bryan Mitchell
STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

In compliance with Executive Order 11593, I hereby nominate this property to the National Register, certifying that the State Historic Preservation Officer has been allowed 90 days in which to present the nomination to the State Review Board and to evaluate its significance. The evaluated level of significance is ___ National ___ State ___ Local.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

TITLE

DATE

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I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION
ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

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**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

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Continuation sheet

Item number 7

Page 2

center of this entablature. A modeled bronze eagle, also originally finished in gold leaf, is centered above the entablature highlighting the volume of space between the top of the vestibule and the interior roof of the dome.

The Washington Boulevard and North Hudson Street facades beyond the return within the frontispiece are detailed in a more utilitarian manner. The openings in these side facades consist of single-hung six-over-six inset windows. The window surrounds consist of brick laid in header bond. The slate roof above these portions of the facade, which are lower than the frontispiece, are hipped. The two remaining facades comprise the rear of the post office and are used as loading areas.

The siting of the building is especially noteworthy. The triangular site created by the acute angle of the intersection of North Hudson Street and Washington Boulevard places special demands on the building that occupies it. The designers of the Arlington Post Office chose to make the building face the point of the triangle at the intersection rather than face either street. The angular massing of the building is further emphasized by the portico, landscaping, and original flagpole at the front of the building. A dynamic of radial expansion is established that extends from the flagpole to the portico, to the northwest facade, and finally encompasses the post office itself.

The interior of the building also participates in the unusual geometry of its exterior. The lobby corresponds to the area articulated by the frontispiece of the building. Postal windows are placed within a curved wall opposite the vestibule entrance. This wall is framed by stylized fluted pilasters of green Cardiff marble that extend up to a simple frieze of the same material. The original anodized aluminum decorative grille is still present below the cornice above the postal windows. The walls of the lobby are faced with polished Tennessee Golden Vein Tavernell marble above a base of Virginia Royal Black marble. The floors are terrazzo with a border of Virginia Greenstone. A simple plaster cornice extends around the lobby. The window openings are recessed within the walls. Austere pilasters with embossed stars on their entablatures articulate the tripartite glazing within the openings.

Two notable features within the lobby are the light fixtures and the murals. The light fixtures consist of "Saturn" globes suspended from the ceiling. Thin anodized aluminum rims decorated with stars encircle white glass globes. The murals are placed in the plaster area above the marble walls below the frieze. The seven 2-1/2 ft. x 4 ft. wide panels depict

**United States Department of the Interior
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**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number 7

Page 3

Indians on Analostan Island, Captain John Smith and the Indians, tobacco picking by the Lee mansion, Robert E. Lee receiving his Confederate commission in Richmond, a picnic at Great Falls, polo players at Fort Myers, and a contemporary harvest at an apple orchard.

Beyond the public lobby of the post office, space is devoted to postal service use. A large pentagonal work room extends back from the postal windows and occupies most of the square footage of the first floor. Offices are located along the North Hudson Street side of the building. A stair at the point of the pentagon furthest from the entrance extends down to the basement where swing rooms, conference rooms, offices, and storage are located.

While the post office has changed over time, none of the changes affect the overall integrity of the building or its ability to convey its associations. Most of the exterior changes have been confined to landscaping and alterations to the loading area at the rear of the building. The street facades retain their original appearance and relationship to the site. The numerous interior alterations have been concentrated within the functional portion of the post office. Despite changes, the original plan and configuration of the building can still be clearly read. Drawings dated 1946 indicate that the mailing platform was extended and the present women's rest room and parcel post chute installed at that time. The impetus for these changes appears to have been the removal of the coal boiler at the south end of the basement. In 1957 the building was air conditioned by Nathan C. Hale Associates. In 1959 the women's toilet and swing room was further altered.

The most extensive changes appear to have been made in 1967. At that time the original postal windows in the lobby were reworked from the single windows that existed originally to the present larger opening. The mail order and registry area and windows at the Washington Boulevard end of the lobby were also replaced with a roll up aluminum shutter. (This was later replaced with the present lock boxes.) The parcel post windows, located on the south wall adjoining the service windows, were removed and replaced with lock boxes. It is probable that the present finishes in the office area along North Hudson Street date from this time as well. Some of the original wood wainscot and batwing partitions still remain around the work room.

Because most of the changes to the office have affected areas not accessible to the public and because changes to the lobby have been sensitive to its architectural features, they do not affect the overall integrity of the building. Within the public space important character defining features like the light fixtures, murals, materials, and windows, as well as the space itself remain unchanged.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only
received
date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number

8

Page 2

The design for the building is an unusual one. It appears to be based on Tudor Place, William Thornton's 1815 residence for the Peter family in Georgetown. Like Tudor Place, it features a central domed portico flanked by tripartite windows inset within arches. This house was published in *Great Georgian Houses of America*, a book that had widespread influence on Colonial revival design. The designers of the Post Office may have been led to Thornton for precedent by the constraints of the triangular site. Thornton produced designs like the President's House that are striking for their use of geometry and proportion. The massing of the Arlington Post Office relates to the site in a manner similar to the Octagon, also by Thornton. The pentagonal post office created by the Supervising Architect of the Treasury incorporates Thornton's approach to space in the organization of its interior. The ease with which this precedent could be adapted to contemporary aesthetics is all the more striking in the context of later buildings in Clarendon. While the frontispiece of the Post Office is a stripped down, but absolutely correct, adaptation of Georgian precedent, the side facades are more modern in their utilitarian detailing. The emphasis on geometric massing combined with simplified ornament produced a building of greater architectural abstraction than was typical of post offices during this period. Thus the building relates well to its more self-consciously modern neighbors and possesses greater dignity and presence than other Georgian revival post offices that have a more domestic character.

By January 1937 the Baltimore firm of J.K Ruff had been chosen as general contractor. They submitted the low bid of \$124,971 for the project. (Sun, January 29, 1937.) Drawings on file at the Arlington Post Office provide information about the building's subcontractors and suppliers. The sheet-metal contractors were R & R, Inc. and the stone contractor was Standard Art Marble and Tile Company, both of Washington. Marble was supplied by the Gray Knox Marble Company of Knoxville, Tennessee; limestone was provided by the Bowman Schwab Stone Company of Bloomington, Indiana. Construction photos show that excavation work had begun by March 1937 and that the foundations and basement were in place when the cornerstone was laid in May of that year. A sign in one of the photos suggests that Alexander Electric Company was responsible for the electrical work. Construction was completed and the Arlington Post Office opened for business on December 13, 1937. (Sun, December 10, 1937.)

Negotiations for the murals did not commence until December of the following year. The marble drawings suggest that the entire plaster area below the marble frieze may originally have been intended for art. However when Edward B. Rowan, Superintendent of the Section of Fine Arts, wrote to

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number

8

Page

3

Auriel Bessemer about the murals, he specified that the \$800 commission was for seven 2-1/2 ft. x 4 ft. panels. By October of 1939 Bessemer's designs and sample canvass had been approved; presumably the murals were completed shortly thereafter. (Lee manuscript.)

Bessemer was a Washington, D.C. artist who completed several post office murals including those in Winnsboro, South Carolina and Hazlehurst, Mississippi. Born in Grand Rapids, Michigan in 1909, he studied at Western Reserve Academy, Columbia University, and at the Roerich Museum. He taught at the National Art School in Washington, the Roerich Academy of Arts, and the Montclair School of Art. His work was widely exhibited. Correspondence with Rowan and biographical information indicates that he had a rather poetic and philosophical orientation toward art. (Lee manuscript.)

In the first year the Arlington Post Office opened, it had 70 employees and annual receipts of \$110,392.52. The following men have served as postmasters: William A. Coates (1936-1943), C. Forbes Simpson (1943-1972), Eugene E. Fleming, Jr. (1973), R.W. Abbott, Sr. (1973-1983), and Kenneth H. Vliestra (1983-present). (Arlington Post Office Scrapbook.)

Because the history of Arlington County is predominately one of the 20th century and because a major theme of that history is the emergence of a unified Arlington identity, the Arlington Post Office is exceptionally significant. Not only is it one of the few remaining early public buildings associated with the County as a whole, it also provided a major focus for civic activity and consolidation. In order to appreciate the important role that the Arlington Post Office played, the extent to which Arlington came of age in the 20th century must be understood. In 1846 Alexandria and what is now Arlington County were retroceded from the District of Columbia to Virginia. The retroceded area became Alexandria County. (The Virginia General Assembly did not change the name to Arlington County until 1920.) In 1870 the Virginia constitution established city/county separation and Alexandria became a city independent of the county in which it had been located. What remained of Alexandria County was divided into three magisterial districts, Washington, Arlington, and Jefferson, which were combined when the Alexandria County Courthouse (later Arlington County Courthouse) was built in 1898.

An important political prerequisite for the emergence of Arlington as an independent entity was the consolidation of county government and the development of increasing independence from Alexandria's dominance. Construction of the 1898 County Courthouse was an important step marking the

**United States Department of the Interior
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**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number

8

Page 4

County's separation from Alexandria where the previous courthouse had been located. The Virginia General Assembly played an important role in the political history of Arlington because enabling legislation that it passed gradually increased the power and jurisdiction of county governments. In 1912 county Boards of Supervisors were granted the same authority as city and town councils. Spurred by Alexandria's annexation of the valuable Potomac rail yards in the southern part of the County in 1911, the County Board of Supervisors resolved in 1913 to give serious consideration to incorporating the largely rural County as an independent city to prevent further predatory action. The General Assembly did not fully protect Arlington from future annexations until 1930. Arlington also faced the threat of formation of independent cities within its boundaries. Clarendon attempted to incorporate but was thwarted by the 1922 Bennett vs. Garrett decision in which the Virginia Supreme Court held that Arlington County was a "continuous, contiguous, and homogenous community" that could not be subdivided by independent cities.

Arlington's demographic and community development parallels its political history. During the period from retrocession to the 1930s, it evolved from a rural area to a suburban community as the independent commuter villages clustered within it multiplied. Arlington's proximity to commerce in Washington and Alexandria retarded the development of an independent commercial life until the 20th century. Residential communities like Ballston, East Falls Church, Cherrydale, and Clarendon developed around commuter rail lines. Each of these villages boasted their own fire departments, schools, and churches. The population growth and attendant development during the early 20th century was enormous. In 1900 the population of the county was 6,430, in 1910 it was 10,231. By 1930 it was 26,615 and in 1940, 57,040.

During the early decades of the 20th century, the disparate villages and rural areas comprising Arlington County became unified into the single community that exists today. This process began with the construction of the County Courthouse, now demolished, in 1898. More and more county-wide institutions were established as the Board of Supervisors took on greater civic responsibility assuming functions formerly handled on an individual basis within each village and subdivision. Weekly newspapers first appeared at the turn of the century. Sewerage and water systems were authorized in the 1920s and 1930s respectively. The County's first hospital was not built until 1944. National and local retail chains opened stores in Clarendon in the 1930s, finally providing a commercial center within Arlington.

The establishment of the Arlington Post Office was a significant factor in

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number 8

Page 5

the emergence of Arlington County as a single community. There were post offices within the County in the late 19th century. Several individual communities had their own post offices prior to the consolidation of postal service in 1936. A large portion of the county was serviced by rural delivery from the Georgetown Post Office in Washington.

In the early 1930s, various civic organizations, business groups, and citizens requested a central post office. More efficient mail and delivery service were important, but the desire to establish an Arlington address was paramount. Clearly people had begun to identify with the County rather than with individual towns and subdivisions. Because of the rapid development the County was experiencing, developments began to crowd into one another. Street names changed randomly and duplicate street names abounded. Some stores refused to deliver merchandise because of this confusion. The Postal Service required that the duplicate street names be eliminated before they could effect the consolidation of a central post office. This proved to be a major obstacle. From 1932 to 1935 a committee of citizens appointed by the Board of Supervisors virtually renamed Arlington County streets unifying the formerly incoherent system. (Kinnier, pp. 42-43.)

It is entirely appropriate that the Arlington Post Office spur this activity that helped the County evolve from an agglomeration of villages to a single entity. The Arlington Post Office was established on July 1, 1936, the largest consolidation of post offices undertaken by the Post Office Department at that time. (Simpson, p.21.) Additionally, Arlington was the only county in the nation slated for city delivery. (Sun, Feb. 26, 1937.) As the first federal building in Arlington County and one of the most impressive public buildings constructed to that date, it made a major impact on the County and its conception of itself. Editorials in the Sun, a county newspaper published in Falls Church, make the significance of the Post Office clear:

The maturity of a community is largely marked by the number of public or semi-public institutions within its boundaries, housed in buildings more or less monumental in character.... Long ago, of course, the Court House was built. One truly monumental school already stands in Washington-Lee, and another is being built. A Federal building is under construction, to house the post office and other Federal offices. It, certainly, is an institution marking an important point on the road to maturity. (Sun, April 2, 1937.)

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only
received
date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number 8

Page 6

The laying of the cornerstone on May 5, 1937 was a major event. The ceremony was attended by several thousand people and was preceded by a 40 float parade. James A. Farley, the Postmaster General, Howard Smith, Arlington's congressman, and Louis A. Simon, the Supervising Architect of the Treasury, were among the many dignitaries present. The trowel used to lay the cornerstone had been used to lay the cornerstones of the U.S. Capitol, the Smithsonian Institute, and the Washington Monument. The Sun commemorated,

the erection of a monumental edifice which, in one sense, is the largest and most important stone placed in the structure of our civic growth in many a year.... Arlington's new post office is a very definite sign that we're growing up. It's a nerve center of business and residential life, and the fact that Uncle Sam decided it was time to build us a 'real' post office means we are not the only ones who think we're an important community.... for the moment it [the ceremony] made us more than casually conscious of our community as a whole, a place where people work and live and build their homes. And that little excitement of our civic consciousness was the best thing in the world for a lot of people. (Sun, May 7, 1937.)

Seen in light of the important function the Arlington Post Office played in the emerging identity of County residents, the murals take on particular significance. More than other art in similar contexts, these murals helped define the culture and heritage of the county. Bessemer's reliance on Virginia, rather than Washington, history is noteworthy. He depicted local Indians and the largely apocryphal journey of John Smith up the Potomac. He focused on Robert E. Lee, Arlington's most famous resident, by depicting the Lee Mansion in the background to the tobacco picking scene and by illustrating him standing before the Virginia assembly. The scenes showing the Great Falls picnic, polo players, and the apple harvest treat pursuits of county citizens. It is especially intriguing that Fort Myers is represented by recreation and that the apple harvest is presented in a recreational, rather than agricultural, light. This emphasis on leisure activities unique to the County seems particularly well suited to a residential community.

The Arlington Post Office thus not only represents an important period in the growth of Arlington County and symbolizes the emerging identity of Arlington, it was also an agent bringing about these developments. Its creation forced the rationalization of the formerly chaotic street system and effected the consolidation of the scattered postal service for the

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only
received
date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number 8

Page 7

County. The dedication provided an occasion for an outpouring of civic feeling. The architecture of the building lives up to the exceptional significance attached to these associations. An excellent example of Georgian revival architecture, the Arlington Post Office is an impressive public building that provides an architectural as well as civic focal point for the County.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only
received
date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number 9

Page 1

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Rose, C.B., Jr. **Arlington County, Virginia: A History.** Baltimore: Port City Press, 1976. (Arlington County Library)

Short, C.W., and Stanley-Brown, R. **Public Buildings: A Survey of Architecture of Projects Constructed by Federal and Other Governmental Bodies Between the Years of 1933 and 1939 with the Assistance of the Public Works Administration.** Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1939. (LC)

U.S. Post Office Department (Postal Service). **Annual Reports of the Postmaster General.** Washington, D.C. (LC)

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Sun, June 1936 - December 1937. (ACL)

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Young, Maggie. "Clarendon." **Arlington Historical Magazine** (October 1978).

Drawings:

Architectural Drawings and Prints for the Arlington Post Office;
Architectural Drawings and Prints for Subsequent Alterations.
(Arlington Post Office)

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only

received

date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number

9

Page

2

Manuscripts and Unpublished Sources:

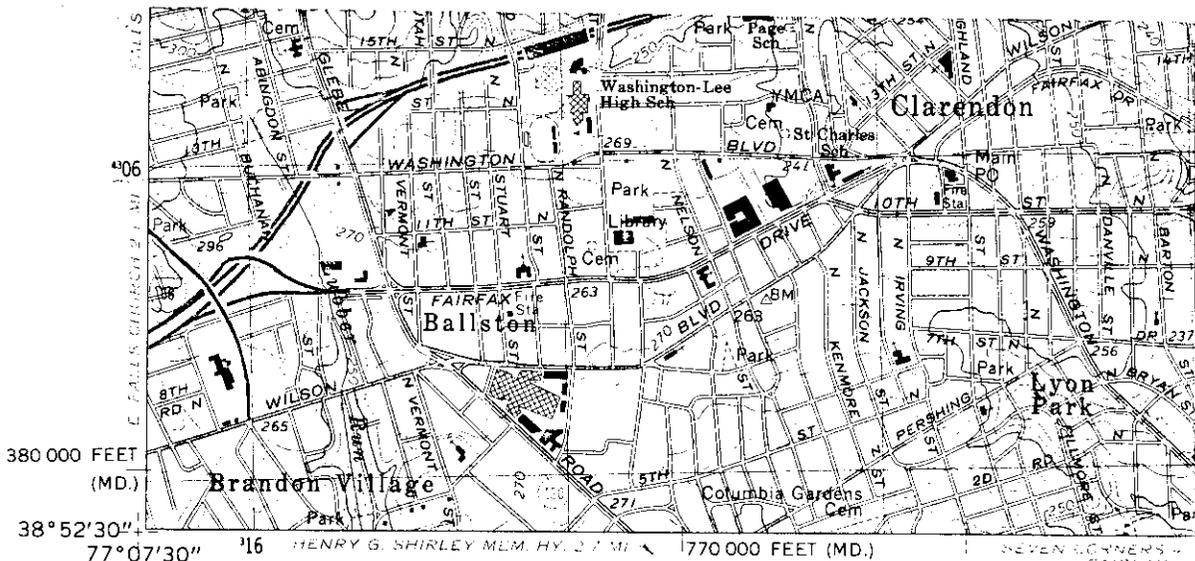
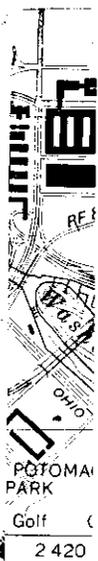
File on Historic Designation of Arlington Post Office. (Arlington Planning Division)

"Historic Resources in the Clarendon Commercial District." (APD)

Lee, Antoinette. Draft Chronological History of Arlington Va. Post Office. (APD)

"Official Program, Luncheon and Cornerstone Laying, United States Post Office, Arlington, Virginia," (May 5, 1937). (Arlington Postmaster)

Scrapbook. (Arlington Postmaster)



(ANNANDALE)
5561 SW

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey and the National Ocean Service

Control by USGS, NOS/NOAA, NCPS, and WSSC

Compiled by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs taken 1955. Field checked 1956. Revised 1965

Bathymetry compiled by the National Ocean Service from tide-coordinated hydrographic surveys. This information is not intended for navigational purposes

Mean low water (dotted) line and mean high water (heavy solid) line compiled by NOS from tide-coordinated aerial photographs. Apparent shoreline (outer edge of vegetation) shown by light solid line

Polyconic projection. 10,000-foot grid ticks based on Maryland coordinate system, and Virginia coordinate system, north zone 1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid, zone 18 1927 North American Datum

To place on the predicted North American Datum 1983 move the projection lines 8 meters south and 26 meters west as shown by dashed corner ticks

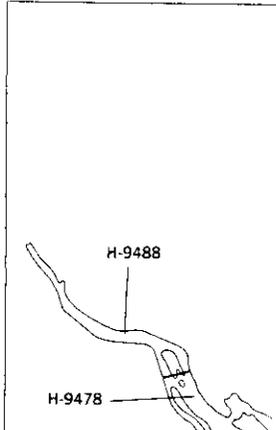
Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown

There may be private inholdings within the boundaries of the National or State reservations shown on this map

Revisions shown in purple and woodland compiled in cooperation with Commonwealth of Virginia agencies from aerial photographs taken 1981 and other sources. This information not field checked Map edited 1983

Purple tint indicates extension of urban areas

NATIONAL OCEAN SERVICE
HYDROGRAPHIC SURVEY INFORMATION



HYDROGRAPHIC SURVEY INFORMATION

Survey Number	Survey Date	Survey Scale
H-9478	1977	1:5,000
H-9488	1976	1:5,000

LOCATION

1°18' 25 MILS

MAGNETIC ENTER OF